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SUBJECT: NORWAY: 2008 COUNTRY REPORTS ON TERRORISM  
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¶1. (U) The following is Embassy Oslo's submission for the 2008 Country Reports on Terrorism. Embassy point of contact is pol/econ officer Scott Sommers, SommersSE@state.gov:

Norwegian authorities continued to consider the threat of terrorist attacks in Norway low and the widespread belief among the general public was that no one would attack Norway.

In December, the parliament revised its antiterrorism laws in order to be able to ratify the Council of Europe Convention on the Prevention of Terrorism. These revisions allowed incitement, recruiting, and training for terrorist acts to become punishable offenses independent of whether an attack is actually carried out. They also, however, require specific "intent" to commit an act that causes terror, whereas the prior standard had been "willfulness" to commit the act.

In February, Norwegian police arrested three suspects of Somali descent for financing terrorism by collecting money for al-Shabaab. In connection with the same money-transferring scheme, three people of Somali descent were also arrested in Sweden. Charges against five of the men were dropped, and only one remains under investigation in Norway, although he is not in custody and retains his passport. Members of the Norwegian press criticized Norway's failure to maintain a separate terrorist organization list, on the grounds that people cannot know which organizations are illegal to contribute to.

In May a court convicted Afran Bhatti of conspiracy to commit "serious vandalism" in connection with gunshots fired at the Oslo synagogue in 2006, but acquitted Bhatti of the charge of terrorism in connection with the shooting and plots to attack the U.S. and Israeli embassies. The court sentenced Bhatti to eight years' imprisonment for attempted murder and threatening behavior--separate charges unrelated to the synagogue shooting and embassy plots--with the possibility of additional detention based upon review of his danger to society. Bhatti remains in custody pending his appeal of the attempted murder conviction.

Norway has contributed more than 500 troops to International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) efforts in Afghanistan.  
JOHNSON